

MAY, 1944

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# THEATRE WORLD

Supplement of "Sweeter and Lower"



HERMIONE GINGOLD and HENRY KENDALL

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# FLASHES

from the brilliant and  
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"...unusually strong play marks debut of **STRIKING ACTRESS, SONIA DRESDER**, whose power, poise, slinking grace are exceptional. ... Writing shrewd & smooth."  
—DAILY HERALD

"...strong meat ... grips interest... very well cast... **IMMENSE SUCCESS.**"  
—NEWS CHRONICLE

"Horror drama ... climax of sheer terror ... **Sonia Dresdel** ... malicious, evil, but fascinating"  
—NEWS of the WORLD

"**Sonia Dresdel** gave brilliantly harrowing performance."  
—DAILY EXPRESS

"Nova Pilbeam, Grey Blake, Shelagh Fraser conspicuously good ... **SONIA DRESDER** ... **EXCITING**"  
—OBSERVER

"**Sonia Dresdel's ... SENSATIONAL STUDY**"  
—SUNDAY EXPRESS

"Miss Dresdel brilliantly supported by John Bryning and Nova Pilbeam ... an exciting evening."  
—James Agate in SUNDAY TIMES

"Swift strikingly effective melodrama... **Sonia Dresdel, John Bryning** **BEAUTIFULLY RESERVED AND POWERFUL** PERFORMANCES."  
—TIMES

"To judge by cheers, Miss Dresdel will be in full eruption for many months to come. Actress and authoress have both deserved success for which both have gone 'all out.'"  
—W. A. Darlington in DAILY TELEGRAPH

From  
**Mr. SYDNEY CARROLL'S**  
article in the  
**SUNDAY CHRONICLE**

"... **Sonia Dresdel's VIBRANT AND MAGNETIC QUALITY** compels attention."  
—A. E. Wilson in THE STAR

"**THE MAGNETISM OF SONIA DRESDER...**"  
"She neither looks, talks nor walks like any other actress ... but from moment of entering to last minute arrests your attention."  
"... dislike her, even detest her, but you will not be able to ignore her, when she goes all-out **SHE WILL ELECTRIFY YOU** ..."

"... finely written last act brilliantly played, a dramatic tension worked up to highest pitch of reality, resulting excitement ensures triumph for play and players ..."

"John Bryning gives Miss Dresdel all that she needs and more in difficult and well-written part ..."

"... could not be more brilliantly played. Lionel Watts, Nova Pilbeam, Grey Blake, Owen Reynolds, all deserve individual appreciation."

"The reception was tumultuous."

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# THEATRE WORLD



*John Vickers*

## **“Uncle Harry”**

MICHAEL REDGRAVE as “Uncle Harry” and BEATRIX LEHMANN as Lettie in a scene from the brilliant production at the Garrick. *Uncle Harry*, one of London’s biggest hits, is reviewed on another page, and will be the subject of our illustrated souvenir in the June issue.



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Edited by Frances Stephens

**May, 1944**

**Over the Footlights**

**T**HEATREGOING in the West End this last month or two has been rather like dipping into a volume called "A Century of Murders" or some such title.

It is always interesting to watch the trend in plays and to hazard a guess as to the whys and wherefores of current fashions in drama. At this present juncture a casual visitor from Mars would, I am sure, be somewhat astonished at our preference for homicide. In a world given over to mass slaughter and torture he might be forgiven for wondering why the mental processes of this or that murderer should be so absorbing. But like the lightest of musical shows, I believe the murder play is a form of escape. If we were asked to consider on the stage that world wide slaughter of the nations we should feel ourselves implicated, as indeed we are. Murder on the other hand is a thing that touches our consciences not at all, since few, if any, of us are likely to harbour even the barest shadow of a homicidal thought. Thus are we able to sit back comfortably in our seats and watch the author dissect his characters like specimens in a museum.

At the moment of writing there are at least six murder plays in the West End, among them *Ten Little Niggers*, *A Murder for a Valentine*, *This Was a Woman*, *Uncle Harry*, *Guilty* and *The Rest is Silence*. These do not, of course, include the murder (or should one say mass-murder) play *par excellence*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, which should, I think, be judged in a class by itself. Of the others the first is mainly ingenious thriller, while the rest have the current fashionable psychological approach.

**I**T is significant that women are for the most part the guilty ones. Shakespeare did not create Lady Macbeth for nothing!

And again the tendency remains to enact the crimes against the background of the stuffy Victorian outlook. It would seem that women took kindly to murder in the days before their emancipation.

By far the most enthralling of the current murders is that of *Uncle Harry*, probably because this is the story of a worm that turned rather than the crime of a fundamentally warped and cruel nature which is the sort, alas, playwrights like to hand out to their ladies.

And now as we go to press comes George Black's brilliant staging of the famous Madeleine Smith trial, *The Rest is Silence*. We are taken a stage further here. We do not know if Madeleine did in fact commit the murder, even though we feel she was quite capable of it, nor does the tantalising girl (brilliantly portrayed by Ann Todd) help us to solve the problem. Nor, therefore, is punishment meted out in the usual way. For we like our murderers to come to justice or to be caught in the throes of never-ending remorse. No playwright would care to bring in a "Not Proven" verdict in a fictitious case and the whole emphasis in the Black production is on the fact that we are witnessing an actual trial, the records of which have been tampered with only in the smallest details.

**T**IME will tell how the public is taking to these varying brands of murder play. Well staged and produced they have an undeniable attraction for frail humanity. I hazard a guess that it is certain to be many years after the peace before we shall be able to view the guilt of the nations with the same detached air.

F.S.

*Wherever smoking is permitted—***ABDULLAS FOR CHOICE**





John Vickers

(Left):

FLORA ROBSON

who has returned to the London stage after an absence of five years with a brilliant performance as the star of a new adaptation by Kathleen Boutall of Zola's famous drama *Thérèse Raquin*, now called *Guilty*. Miss Robson, who is seen in this picture as *Thérèse*, returned last autumn from America, where she had enjoyed many outstanding successes on stage and screen, to join the Old Vic 1943-44 season.

**"A Murder for a Valentine"**—Lyric, March 22nd.

**"One Room"**—Apollo, March 23th.

**"Uncle Harry"**—Garrick, March 29th.

**"Something for the Boys"**—Coliseum, March 30th.

**"The Lilac Domino"**—His Majesty's, April 5th.

**"Meet Me Victoria"**—Victoria Palace, April 8th.

**"Six Pairs of Shoes"**—Playhouse, April 10th.

**"Guilty"**—Lyric, Hammersmith, April 18th.

## New Shows of the Month

### "A Murder for a Valentine"

SINCE murder has become current theatre fare it seems well to say that no amount of ingenuity or "atmosphere" will compensate for characters that do not begin to live even at curtain fall. Vernon Sylvaïne, who has written some workmanlike farces, is obviously out of his element, and although Cathleen Nesbitt and Malcolm Keen struggle nobly to infuse some reality into the guilty ex-lovers, one just cannot believe in the sordid motives which lead them to stage a murder, nor in the submissiveness of their "victim."

The story is told against a Victorian background of the more spacious variety. Cathleen Nesbitt appears as Delia Channing, an embittered and frustrated woman, who engineers the "suicide" of her niece, Veronica (Anne Allan). Actually the girl is hidden in a bricked-up room and when Delia's partner in the "crime," the ne'er do well Ernest Motford (Malcolm Keen) is accused of the murder of the girl, Delia further demonstrates her inhumanity by deserting him at the critical hour. The trial scene in Act II is the bright spot of the play, with some excellent acting from all concerned, including Ronald Millar as Veronica's soldier husband and Ethel Coleridge as the housekeeper. Unfortunately

the last act descends to melodrama of the most lurid kind, though it must be admitted it was a relief to witness the violent end of the unpleasant Delia at the hands of Motford, appropriately driven insane by his grim experience.

F.S.

### "One Room"

THIS play was witnessed with a mixture of boredom and indignation. Boredom with a farce that never seemed to me to achieve more than a snail's pace, and indignation at the thought that some worthwhile play might be held up for want of a West End theatre.

Maybe I was not in the right mood for a housepainter (Gene Gerrard) who hops in and out of an artist's studio window, nude model (Phyllis Clare) notwithstanding, nor with the marital intrigues of the artist (Carl Bernard) and his wife (Winifred Shotter). Reginald Long, the author, tries to elaborate his theme with some doubtful dialogue which has occasional witty flashes, but I refuse to believe that such people ever eked out their purposeless existences in the purlieus of Chelsea. I was, however, quite attracted by the room—empty.

F.S.



## "Uncle Harry"

**H**ERE is a play that seemed to me flawless in construction, absorbing in every line and brilliantly acted down to the smallest part. Not for a long time have I been so completely satisfied by an evening at the theatre.

Thomas Job's play, which will be dealt with fully in pictures next month, is the psychological study of a man who was driven to murder by the frustration of his humdrum respectable existence, in a small north country town. He hated being called "Uncle Harry" on account of his inoffensive and gentle disposition, and hated the possessiveness of his spinster sisters, who pampered him and quarrelled over him and finally prevented him from marrying the girl he loved. But there was no escape from the prison organised for him by his father who left his three children financially independent provided they lived together in their comfortable suburban house.

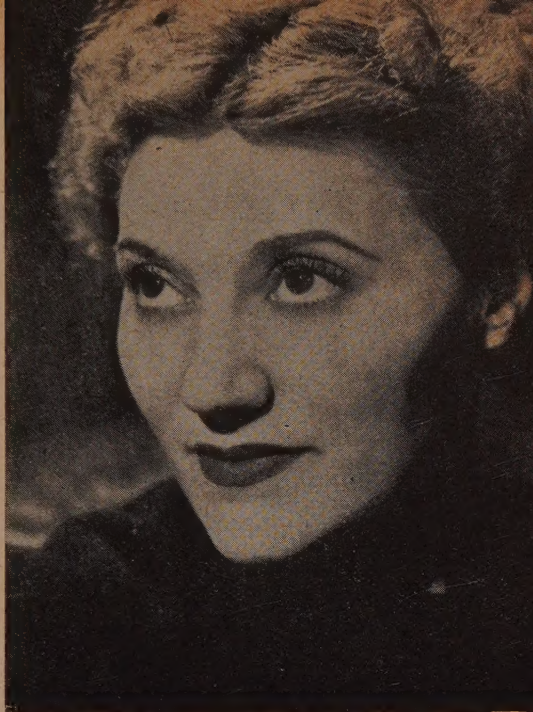
The time is 1908, when existence was placid and the local glee club an institution of importance. The poison of frustration works in Harry Quincey's mind. He might still get the girl he loves if——. He commits the "perfect" murder, so perfect in fact that no one will believe him when—deserted by the conventionally-minded girl—he confesses his guilt as the only way out of his appalling loneliness. And so it is that in the prologue-epilogue, in August, 1912, we are introduced to Uncle Harry, a wreck of a man, shunned by all, who like the Ancient Mariner is doomed to waylay each passing stranger with the tale of his dreadful crime.

Michael Redgrave gives the most brilliant performance of his career as the desperately callous Harry Quincey who uses every artifice of the weak-minded to elaborate his plan, and Beatrix Lehmann and Ena Burrill as Lettie and Hester, his sisters, play out each mood of possessiveness from jealousy to hysteria up to Lettie's final grim revenge, with horrific reality. Every other member of the splendid company deserves praise, particularly Rachel Kempson as the girl who was the immediate cause of Uncle Harry's crime, and Arthur Davis, John Garside, Robert Young, Hugh Stewart and Lee Fox as the members of the Glee Club.

F.S.

## "Something for the Boys"

**T**HIS musical stands or falls by the dynamic personality of Evelyn Dall. The story is very thin—one might almost say non-existent—and even the Cole Porter music and lyrics do not overwhelm. However, the production is good and the ladies of the chorus talented and good to look at. The principals, including Daphne Barker, Jack Barker, Bobby Wright, Leigh Stafford, Marianne Davis, Harry Moreny, Jack Bill-



John Vickers

ENA BURRILL

who contributes a fine character study to *Uncle Harry* as Hester, Harry Quincey's elder sister.

ings, Hilde Palmer, Dorothy Saxby, Molly Dixon and Bernard Ansell put every ounce into the funny business, song and dance.

Evelyn Dall is a grand little leading lady and we are sure to see more of her on the musical stage. She works wonders with this story of American army manoeuvres. I would not have missed her.

F.S.

## "The Lilac Domino"

**J**ACK HYLTON gives us another lavish production of an old favourite. *The Lilac Domino*, reviewed in pictures elsewhere in this issue, comes over with charm and freshness, tuneful as ever, a real romantic treat.

## "Meet Me Victoria"

**T**HIS is Lupino Lane's show. As Bill Fish the little Cockney porter who is forcibly married to a dominating if attractive alien "strongwoman" seeking British nationality (a wholeheartedly boisterous performance by Dorothy Ward), nearly losing his girl friend Dot Hawkins in the process, he has fine scope for his own particular brand of humour with its endearing touch of pathos.

There is an excruciatingly funny scene in





DOROTHY WARD

who plays the part of Loretta Zelma, professional strongwoman, in Lupino Lane's lively new musical at the Victoria Palace.

a swaying railway carriage. Mr. Lane's efforts to take the soup, followed by a contretemps with a chicken and a fellow passenger's military baggage have to be seen to be believed. Later the little porter is trapped in a hotel bedroom by his bogus wife and with what coyness he tackles this embarrassing situation can well be imagined. Between whiles he is chivvied about by an outsize in stationmasters (William Norman), Dot Hawkins' kid brother (Lauri Lupino Lane) and an entire band of strongwomen, Zelma's attractive amazon troupe.

Phyllis Robins is most appealing as Dot, the girl friend, and Wallace Lupino and Ann Booth complete a cheery if broke Pimlico family circle as Dad and Mum, with rare gusto. There is a pleasant familiarity about the scenes on Victoria Station with which the show opens and closes, and one or two of the Noel Gay numbers are certain to prove popular.

F.S.

### "Six Pairs of Shoes"

THE shoes belong to six young cabaret artistes in this tale of human problems and Nazi spies, interspersed with actual glimpses of the floor show which provides their bread and butter. There is a naïfete about the story, but the young authoress, Monica Disney Ullman, who also appears as one of the girls, shows signs of skill in dialogue, and the ragged ends are knit

together by song, dance and music by Harry Roy and his band, the six girls, and Paddy Browne, who as Nina, a Polish refugee and star of the cabaret, sings some delightful numbers.

Betty Huntley Wright and Georgina Cookson with considerable revue experience behind them are in their element as Jean and Irene, most human of the girls. Anna Kemp, Hariette Johns and Miss Ullman are in support, with Moira Lister as the unpleasant Nazi and Valentine Dunn as Maggies, the dresser. Gerald Gray appears as a ubiquitous page, and Harry Roy and his stalwarts, of course, as themselves.

### "Guilty"

THE reopening of the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, scene of so many Nigel Playfair triumphs, is a happy event for theatre lovers. The first production, connected both with C.E.M.A. and the Old Vic, and marking Flora Robson's return to the London stage after too long an absence, meant an exciting welding of some of the most important forces in the serious theatre.

Zola's *Therese Raquin*, here retitled *Guilty*, is strong meat for the stage and its turbulent and sordid passion provides magnificent opportunities for the actors which are as magnificently seized. Inevitably the psychological development in the novel cannot be as fully and subtly explored in the play; but the havoc wrought by guilt in the characters and minds of the lovers is perhaps the more dramatic for its suddenness, the violent recrimination and searing mental torment of the last scene coming with a shock of genuine horror. Throughout this scene the figure of Madame Raquin, who knows the secret of her son's murder but, stricken by a paralytic stroke, cannot denounce his murderers, looms like a terrible and avenging ghost. No murder play has had a scene of more petrifying tension and Violet Farebrother, concentrating into her eyes alone the whole pent-up lava of the old woman's sardonic balefulness, frustration and venom, here bestrides the stage like a Colossus.

Flora Robson, who, playing superbly against her physical type, has throughout painted a nervously vital portrait of the sensuous and passion-fevered Therese, also achieves in this scene a dreadful intensity. This is emotional acting of rare power in which face, voice and gesture mirror the sickening agony and fear of a character not strong enough to face the consequences of murder. Michael Golden's Laurent is a trifle too pleasant in the early scene to make his murderous intent credible, but he also conveys much of the weakness and strain of the last scene, and the support of O. B. Clarence, Roy Malcolm, Frank Petley and Kay Bannerman is admirable.

A.W.



SCENES and  
FRONT  
COVER  
STUDY by  
JOHN  
VICKERS



(Right):  
 HERMIONE  
 GINGOLD  
 in  
*Thanks, Yanks,*  
 with  
 HENRY  
 KENDALL  
 as the Statue of  
 Liberty.

## “Sweeter and Lower”

AT THE AMBASSADORS

THIS is surely the most brilliant of all the intimate revues London has seen. If *Sweet and Low* was in the top class, the new edition—an almost entirely new show—has outstripped even that notable effort, and has confirmed that without a shadow of doubt J. W. Pemberton knows the secret of success in this field, and that his able producer, Charles Hickman, and the magnificent company can be relied upon to do

the rest.

Hermione Gingold, who holds a unique place as our leading revue artiste, gives the best performance of her career. Henry Kendall, new to the company, is at the top of his form and the supporting cast of talented young people have never served better with wit, song and dance. Tribute is due to the authors who have once again contributed some excellent material.





**"Services  
Rendered"**

Gretchen Franklin as the dresser, Henry Kendall as a Major of the Guards and Hermione Gingold as Charmaine Vavasour in the excruciatingly funny backstage skit, brought up to date in part two (see picture below).



*Major Willis: I'd go through hell for you, Charmaine.*  
Another diverting moment from part one of "Services Rendered."

*Rear-Commodore Beatrice Wilberforce: By the way, Alexis, are you White Russian. Nokemova: No, White City, reely.*



(ht):

## Port of Call"

moving, boys. *Keep moving.*

ry Kendall strikes a serious  
and proves his ability as actor  
the Merchant Navy officer in the  
monologue "Port of Call."



(ow):

mione Gingold in contrasting  
ds, as an incredible 'cello  
st in "'Cello Solo" and as  
omann's Hamlet in "Advice to  
the Players."



## 'Cello Solo"

*If I'd only never taken up the 'cello,  
I'd walk beside you in the usual way.*



## "Advice to the Players"

*I feel all that it needs is a dash of Sylphides  
Some Tchaikovsky and Margot Fonteyn.*





### "Wall Flowers"

*Cheering the boys who are winning the war,  
For that's what Pin-up Girls are for.*

Yvonne Jaques, Mary Irwin and Pauline Fraser in a topical and glamorous number.



Edna Wood and Gretchen Franklin in a charming period number.



Driver (Richard Curnock): London's a b  
place.

Clippie (Gretchen Franklin): You're tellin  
me.

"Clippie," like "Poison Ivy," is one of the  
popular items from the first edition.

(Left): **"Beauties at Bath"**

It makes such a change from the fami  
hearth

When Colonel Porter's daughters take t  
waters at Bath.



## Low-down on Whittington "

*U.S. Private: Say, Duchess, who's the dame?  
Duchess: That's not the Dame! That's the Principal Boy.*

Henry Kendall at his funniest as the Duchess who takes a U.S. soldier (Bonar Colleano) to his first pantomime.



## Perchance to Dream "

*Hello, hello, hello! Oh, it's old Blenkinsop!*

Henry Kendall as the repressible husband and Lena Sylva as his long-suffering wife, in an amusing piece of nocturnal domesticity.



## Am I in Love? "

Edna Wood, George Hadden and the Girls in one of the charming song and dance numbers. Tribute is also due to George Hadden for his arrangement of the dances and ensembles throughout, and to Berkeley Sutcliffe, who is again responsible for the décor and costumes of the entire production.







### **" Mr. Harding "**

George Carden, Edna Wood, Gretchen Franklin and Bonar Colleano with the Girls in one of the most gay and spirited numbers of the show. (*Below left*): Edna Wood is seen with George Carden in another moment from " Mr. Harding " and (*below*) as she appears in " Am I in Love?" Edna Wood, who looks lovely and dances delightfully, has more to do in this edition and proves herself one of our brightest and most talented young revue actresses in a variety of charming items.





## "Vienna lingers On"

*We will remember Vienna Steaks,  
One of Lord Woolton's supreme mistakes.*

Hermione Gingold as Fritz, the toast of Vienna, with Bonar Colleano and Richard Curnock as her admirers, and Olive Wright as the Maid, in a skit on the famous Novello musical.

(Below):

## "Mabel"

*Have you met Society's pet, the Queen of the livery stable,  
The horse that men bow to, that Princes know to to,  
The filly that's known as Mabel?*

Hermione Gingold, Richard Curnock, Ilona Sylva and Henry Kendall in the quartette in New York's Central Park, 1900.







(Left):

### "Poor Cinderella"

*I lost my little glass  
slipper,*

*But I learned a thing or  
two I never knew.*

Edna Wood, with Richard Curnock and George Carden in a charming Cinderella number, very much up to date.

(Below):

### "Thanks, Yanks"

Hermione Gingold, Henry Kendall and the Company in the rousing chorus which pays graceful tribute to our American Allies.



*Thanks, Yanks, for just being here and spreading good cheer.*



# Whispers from the Wings

BY  
LOOKER ON

THE special brand of revue dubbed "intimate" is a tricky type of theatre demanding a nice sense of judgment and a real knowledge of the public's current fancy. It was therefore a real pleasure to meet J. W. Pemberton, the man behind *Sweeter and Lower*, that brilliant piece of entertainment which has been a sensational success, even more so than the original *Sweet and Low*, which packed the Ambassadors for eight months.

My first impression of Mr. Pemberton was his extraordinary modesty. His great anxiety was to pay tribute to his wonderful company, to the skill of Charles Hickman (his producer), and the talent of the composers and authors who have provided the material. At the same time I discovered that it is Mr. Pemberton who selects the material, plans the production as a whole, displaying a rare knowledge of his subject every inch of the way.

My second feeling was that here was a man with an unusual amount of sound commonsense who is not to be diverted from a sound proposition by any dreams of mythical conquests in other fields. He rejoices in the strong position he holds of being able to present his own show at his own theatre (he has taken the Ambassadors on a long lease). This attitude is all the more remarkable because his life to date has not been, as one might imagine, a carefully planned affair. Far from it. He told me with some amusement how he began his theatrical adventures in the last war, as a "playboy" with money to burn. "I was lucky, too," he said "and I often recall that one of my earliest shows was *Telling the Tale* at this very theatre in 1918." Which reminds me that the Ambassadors proved itself the natural home of revue in those days after C. B. Cochran took a lease of the theatre in 1914 and presented the successes, *Odds and Ends*, *More and Pell-Mell*. Mr. Pemberton has achieved the same success in eight months at same theatre.

After the last war Mr. Pemberton gained a wide experience in theatrical management in various parts of the world, and particularly on the Continent, where it is certain he developed his flair for revue. The result is that he has been able to infuse into his shows a speed and spontaneity unhappily not often found in the English product.

In 1935 he presented *Fritzi* at the Adelphi, and in addition to his lease of the Ambassadors acquired an interest in the Shaftesbury (which has, of course, been a war casualty), and in the St. Martin's. The latter he has now disposed of. The Ambassadors he has decided is to be the permanent home in London for intimate revue, a happy



J. W. PEMBERTON *Peter Clark*

climax to the work he has done for this specialised form of entertainment in the years just before and during the war.

One of Mr. Pemberton's chief pleasures is the discovery of new talent and certainly he has given the stars in his show the support of some outstandingly gifted young people who are certain to go far. He knows he will have to lose them in due course (Brenda Bruce, now in the new Terence Rattigan play at the Globe, is a "discovery" from *Sweet and Low*), but he feels that their ultimate success is a real reward.

It was quite casually towards the end of our conversation that Mr. Pemberton mentioned the fact which is, I think, the clue to the man as he is to-day, and that is that for ten years now he has been nearly blind. It is amazing how he has overcome this tragic handicap. With the aid of powerful lenses and strong stage lighting he is able to watch rehearsals from the front stalls, when he can discern enough of the movements on the stage to judge how everything is going. And he has that calm, quiet manner and poise often found in those who have grappled successfully with physical disability.

It was indeed a refreshing experience to talk to a successful impresario of such rare modesty. Intimate revue in London is in safe and capable hands.



# Echoes from Broadway

IN WHICH OUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT, E. MAWBY GREEN, RETURNS TO OUR PAGES WITH NEWS OF THE LATEST NEW YORK PRODUCTIONS.

**A**T the present time John van Druten is enjoying the biggest hit of his career with *The Voice of the Turtle*. One of the remarkable features of this outstanding comedy success is that there are only three people in it: Margaret Sullavan, Elliot Nugent and Audrey Christie, but each is perfectly suited to the part he portrays and achieves a tremendous personal success.

The plot is simple but utterly delightful in its appeal. On paper and three thousand miles away it may seem difficult to believe that what Mr. van Druten has written holds an audience spellbound for three acts and for the most part with only two characters on stage. That it does is a tribute to the author's writing and direction and the brilliant playing of the cast. Sgt. Bill Page (Elliot Nugent) comes to New York on a three-day pass all set for a wicked week-end, consisting of dinner and privileges with Olive Lashbrooke (Audrey Christie) an actress and one of the numbers in his little black book. Unfortunately the sergeant is stood up for the navy, for an old favoured flame of Miss Lashbrooke's puts into port the same evening and she prefers to do something for that branch of the service. She explains her date dilemma to Sally Middleton (Margaret Sullavan), an aspiring young actress friend of smallish parts, and asks Sally to support her alibi for breaking the engagement with the sergeant, to merely give him a drink and send him on his way. To the surprise of nobody, Sally and the sergeant become attracted to each other. On the first night they have dinner together, but with no privileges, for Sally is just rallying from an unhappy affair with a noted theatrical producer, and is in a quandary as to how many affairs one is allowed to have before being stamped promiscuous. However, before the three-day pass expires Sally has done more than pinch-hit for the promiscuous Olive, for Sally and Bill find themselves actually in love.

## Magnificent Acting

Miss Sullavan has not been seen on the New York stage since her success in *Stage Door*, which was quite a few years ago, but despite her long sojourn in Hollywood she has lost none of her infectious stage personality, charm and superb technique.

She is a magnificent actress and gives to *The Voice of the Turtle* a warmth and radiant glow. Equally suited and satisfactory is her co-star Elliot Nugent, who through his sincere performance makes the attraction between Sally and Bill entirely believable. Audrey Christie, a well-liked and highly skilled actress, contributes what else is necessary to the success of this comedy. Stewart Chaney's three-in-one setting: bedroom, living-room, and kitchen, is so completely right and workable that it has become the talk of the season. Alfred de Liagre, Junr., is the lucky producer and one of the most envied entrepreneurs in town, for *The Voice of the Turtle* is destined to make a fortune for all those connected with it. Many London managers have been bidding for the British rights, and it is said that Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh as well as Robert Donat and Merle Oberon would like to carry on in the West End in the Elliot Nugent and Margaret Sullavan roles. However, Mr. de Liagre at this writing has not made up his mind beyond the New York production, although Olivia de Havilland and Franchot Tone have been mentioned repeatedly for the Chicago company. One last word was that Mr. de Liagre might wait until the war is over and then take the Broadway cast to London. That *The Voice of the Turtle* will be seen in the West End is inevitable and its success over there is equally assured.

## New Dodie Smith Play

Dodie Smith did not fare as well with her latest play, *Lovers and Friends*, which Katharine Cornell and John C. Wilson presented, with Miss Cornell and Raymond Massey playing the leading roles and Henry Daniell, Carol Goodner and Anne Burr in supporting parts.

Miss Cornell who when in doubt on a new script turns faithfully to the classics: principally Shaw, Shakespeare and Chekov, has not been seen on Broadway in a new play since Behrman's *No Time for Comedy* in 1939, so her appearance in *Lovers and Friends* was looked forward to with a considerable interest. Offhand we would have thought Dodie Smith's delightfully human and invariably brilliant brand of playwrighting admirably suited to Miss Cornell's equally admirable style of drawing room



The entire cast! L-R: Margaret Sullivan, Elliot Nugent and Audrey Christie in *The Voice of the Turtle*, John van Druten's latest and biggest success.

acting. Unfortunately in *Lovers and Friends* neither Miss Cornell's portrayal nor Dodie Smith's playwrighting turned out to be very impressive. We have never considered Raymond Massey the perfect drawing room type of actor either, always preferring him in character parts after his long link as Abe Lincoln—the part that made him in America and still towers over him. The performances we did like, however, in *Lovers and Friends* were those of Carol Goodner and Henry Daniell. In a prologue which takes place in Regent's Park in 1918, Miss Cornell meets Mr. Massey for the first time. Mr. Massey has just been jilted by Carol Goodner, an actress friend of Miss Cornell, but before the short prologue is over Mr. Massey and Miss Cornell are well on their way to falling in love with each other. Acts 1, 2 and 3 shift to 1930, to the drawing room of Miss Cornell and Mr. Massey. They are now married and have two growing sons. Mr. Massey gets restless, having met on a bus the young and understanding Anne Burr. The usual romantic complications ensue. Mr. Massey blabs beautifully of his love for Miss Burr to the sympathetic Miss Cornell who, after talking it over with Miss

Burr and suffering nobly, agrees to give Mr. Massey the divorce he seeks. Meanwhile, Miss Cornell decides she is in love with the playwright-novelist, Henry Daniell. She doesn't marry him, however, for Mr. Massey, despite his expert training as a barrister, discovers just in time what we knew two acts ago, namely, that Miss Burr was not the nice girl he thought she was. The epilogue in 1942 is back in Regent's Park. The world is at war again, but Miss Cornell and Mr. Massey are still at peace with each other. Meanwhile, Miss Goodner and Mr. Daniell have found each other.

### Immaculate Production

*Lovers and Friends* has been given the customary immaculate Cornell production, with settings and costumes by Motley and staging by Guthrie McClintic. As a theatrical event it is disappointing and does not provide the opportunity we had hoped for Miss Cornell to display to the full her richly renowned talents. After the New York engagement, *Lovers and Friends* will doubtless take to the road for a short spell, then we shall impatiently await the

(Continued next page)



**E**NGINEER SERGEYEV is the first play of the young writer, Vladimir Rokk. Its purpose is to re-create one of the most acutely painful situations of the beginning of the present war when Soviet people had to destroy the factories, mines and power stations, patiently built up through long years of labour, so that they might not fall into the hands of the enemy.

The action of the play is centred around its hero, a prominent engineer. Sergeyev is in charge of a large power station which he must blow up. The Germans, knowing that the Soviet people would be reluctant to destroy their fine power station and would hold out to the last flicker of hope, attempt to turn the situation to their own advantage. They want to seize the power station intact. Nazi agents set a trap for Engineer Sergeyev. He falls into their hands but still manages to outwit them and blow up the station with men of the German command inside. He also dies in the explosion.

In a series of tensely dramatic situations the fate of the power station is linked up on the one hand with the lives of its employees, with Engineer Sergeyev's family and the people of the surrounding farms, and on the other hand with the Germans and their agents. The author's clear conception of the motives and convictions of his characters make the play powerful and realistic. There is some comic relief.

The first performance of the play took place in the Griboyedov Russian Dramatic Theatre in Tbilisi in the Caucasus, and after it went on tour to all the Trans-Caucasus theatres. It was translated into the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaidjan languages.

*Engineer Sergeyev* is now having its premiere in Moscow.

### Alexander Fevralsky

**L**OLA a new ballet, the action of which carries us to Spain in the Napoleonic invasion of 1808-09, is having a most successful run at the Moscow Musical Theatre named after the famous Russian dramatists, Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko.

The story is of Napoleon's troops bursting into a peaceful Spanish village. The peasants arm themselves with anything to hand and make for the mountains, pitching their guerilla camp in a remote gorge. A traitor, a local miller, betrays them to Napoleon's troops and the invaders suddenly fall upon the guerillas. Lola, a peasant girl, sets out for the French camp, with another Spanish woman, to take revenge upon the enemy. She takes a jug of poisoned wine. The French captain, sensual and self-confident,

risers to the bait, falls for Lola's charms and agrees to drink a glass of wine with her. He insists on Lola drinking with him. At the cost of her own life Lola kills him.

The music to *Lola* consists of works of the Spanish composers, Laparra, Albenis, Alvarez and others supplemented by Sergius Vassilenko, the well-known Soviet composer. Vladimir Burmeister, ballet master, and Joseph Tumanov, stage manager, have created a colourful performance.

The performance contains many national Spanish dances, both merry and sad, in which are admirably conveyed the customs, life and manners of the old Spanish village. But it is in the fighting scenes that the producer's imagination has full play. By means of a revolving stage the fight is shown in a series of episodes.

Act III reveals the psychologically complicated duel between Lola and the French captain. Lola is played by the talented Maria Sorokina.

The finale is admirable. The Spanish guerillas, in awed silence, are shown ascending the stone terraces, bearing away into the mountains the body of their beloved Lola.

It is a ballet of romantic passions and daring constructive art.

### Matvei Grimev

### Echoes from Broadway

(Cont. from previous page)

announcement of Miss Cornell's choice for her next production.

We have also had this season a new comedy by Frederick Lonsdale, *Another Love Story*, which due to the popularity of Roland Young and Margaret Lindsay who starred in it, managed to stay around longer than it would have ordinarily after the discouraging reviews. While we must admit Mr. Lonsdale's dialogue and epigrams lacked the wit and brilliance of his earlier successes, *Another Love Story* was not helped much by the acting and staging. Arthur Margetson, in one of the featured roles; seemed to be the only member of the cast really suited and at ease in this typical Lonsdale drawing room comedy. Performed with a more uniform understanding and respect for the Lonsdale style of comedy, perhaps the results would have been less disastrous.

The next play to reach New York of British authorship will be W. Somerset Maugham's *Sheppey*, with Edmund Gwenn and Barbara Everest, and Sir Cedric Hardwicke directing. *Sheppey* will arrive in mid-April and will be reviewed in the next issue, along with a report on other Broadway activities of the season which we were unavoidably prevented from discussing earlier.



ARTHUR RISCOE and CAROLE LYNNE

*Tunbridge-Sedgwick*

the stars in the entirely new production of *Jill, Darling*, which opened at the Winter Garden on April 21st, too late for review in this issue. With this production Arthur Riscoe becomes actor-manager, and he is presenting the show with Paul Murray and Alfred Zeitlin. Carole Lynne, his charming leading lady, made a big hit as Cinderella in the recent pantomime at His Majesty's. Many new songs are included in this new edition of the sparkling musical which put the then new Saville Theatre on the map.

## In the News

### BRENDA BRUCE

A new portrait of the clever young actress who is appearing in Terence Rattigan's *While the Sun Shines* at the Globe. Miss Bruce first attracted attention in the West End when she was at the Ambassadors in *Sweet and Low*.

*John Vickers*



(Below):

### TREVOR HOWARD

who is appearing in *A Soldier for Christmas*, now at the Vaudeville, is a young actor new to most playgoers because he has not been seen in London since *French Without Tears*. At the end of that long run he went to Colchester and Harrogate to do repertory work and from Harrogate joined the Army early in 1940. He was recently discharged on medical grounds with the rank of Captain, M.C. (Paratroops). He played the name part in *The Recruiting Officer* and was in *On Life's Sunny Side* at the Arts Theatre last December, and received great praise from the critics.

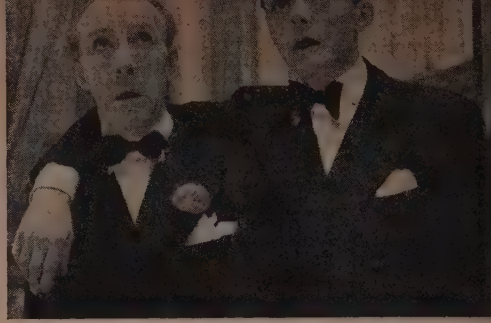
*John Vickers*



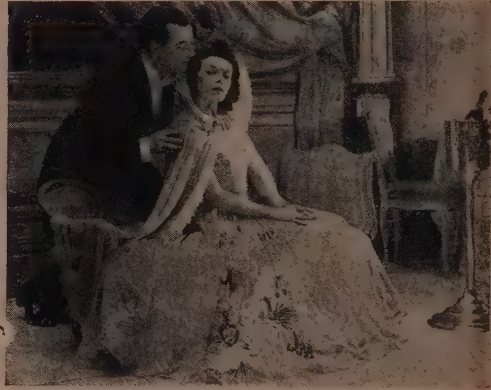




Pat Taylor as Georgine (the Lilac Domino) dances with Elliston Deyn (Graham Payn) in the lounge of the Casino, Palm Beach, where she has come unknown to her father.

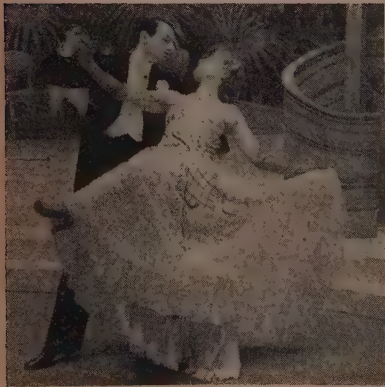


Leo Franklyn as Prosper and Richard Dolman as Norman in an amusing moment from Act I.



The Hon. Andre D'Aubigny (Bernard Clifton) falls in love with the Lilac Domino, not knowing that she is Georgine, the daughter of Colonel Cleveden.

## Scenes from "The Lilac Domino"



Another lovely dance from Act I, in which Graham Payn partners Elizabeth French, who plays the part of Leonie Forde.



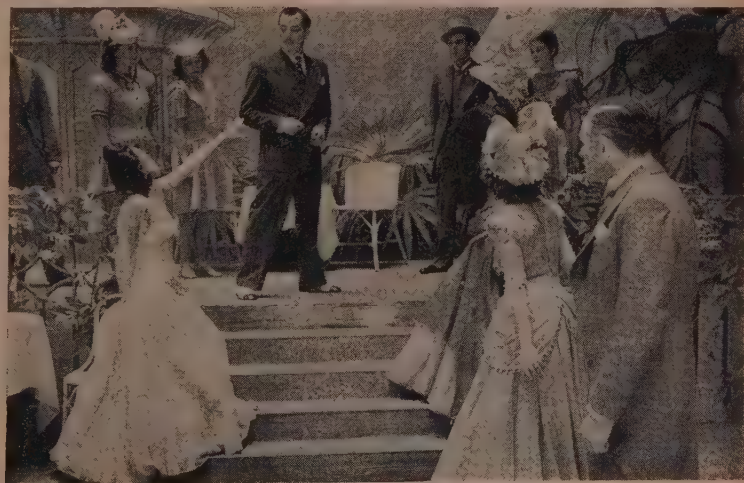
The Lilac Domino in a gay dance with Elliston Deyn and Colonel Cleveden (Billy Holland) who do not recognise this lovely creature as Georgine, the girl Elliston is supposed to marry.



The colourful scene in Act II on the terrace of Colonel Cleveden's villa. *Top:* Prosper and Norman, who are completely broke as a result of gambling losses, are determined that their friend, Andre, shall marry the Colonel's heiress daughter and arrive uninvited to make way for the would-be suitor.

*Left:* Andre meets Georgine, who reminds him irresistibly of the lovely Lilac Domino. Later Georgine discovers the plan of the three men and is heart-broken at Andre's trick. In the dramatic scene below she dismisses him for ever, and Andre, puzzled by the turn of events, pleads in vain.

# Jack Hylton's Revival at His Majesty's Theatre







PAT TAYLOR, who has scored a big personal triumph as the Lilac Domino. This is Miss Taylor's most important role to date and she has risen to the occasion magnificently. Not only does she sing and dance delightfully, but proves herself a young actress of undoubted talent.

*Below:* The brilliant carnival scene in Act III in which a clever ballet with Bebe de Roland as ballerina adds colour and life to the gay proceedings, during which the lovers are re-united.



# Conversation Piece

by

*Eric Johns.*

**S**TARS seem to play dirty little tricks on you now and again. They slip out through the foyer while you are waiting to see them at the Stage Door. Your unswerving loyalty to them persuades you to manufacture excuses on their behalf, but if anyone else appeared to avoid you like the plague you would resent such slighting behaviour in no uncertain tones.

Has it ever occurred to you that artists may dread meeting you? Do you know why they go out of their way to avoid you?

Cornelia Otis Skinner does!

This gifted daughter of one of the greatest of all American actors has been feted for a decade or more as one of the three solitary women of our time to bring the art of the diseuse to undisputed perfection. Together with Yvette Guilbert and Ruth Draper, she has presented a long gallery of widely differing characterisations with that rich humour and keen human insight invariably denied to all those countless imitators who eventually prove but pale shadows of these Past-mistresses of One-Woman Magic.

On this account Cornelia's dressing room has rung with every known form of compliment, both fabulous and fatuous, and she has been clever enough to record her reactions in a language we can all understand. Seven years have passed since this accomplished artist enthralled us in London with her vivid portraits of the Empress Eugénie and the Wives of Henry VIII, but the House of Constable has happily reminded us of her active existence by publishing in this country a gay little volume entitled *Popcorn*.

## Clever Satire

In this omnibus collection of humorous pieces Cornelia shows that she can put over in writing as deftly and as amusingly as on the stage that peculiar blend of self-mockery and topical satire which is her speciality. Furthermore, a foundation of solid truth underlies all her observations, and on that account her remarks concerning the relationship between star and hero-worshipper are most enlightening.

She defends actors from that charge of being "high-hat," which is often levelled at them by admirers who have not taken a rebuff in as sporting a manner as they might have done. As Cornelia says, "Actors who often as not are retiring by nature and desperately ill at ease in any milieu other than the theatre, show up worse than most celebrities because they're expected to be so much better. They are bored and unhappy

and their attempts to hide this ennui results in that 'high-hat' expression."

## Foolish Remarks

You alone are to blame for all this. Cornelia's masterly observation crystallises the whole problem in one memorable sentence: "The root of most of the trouble lies in the fact that one is constantly being overwhelmed with remarks to which there is absolutely no reply." When people meet actors "they seem to labour under the illusion that they must greet them with



*Portrait by Phyfe*

CORNELIA OTIS SKINNER

something special and the greeting turns out to be so exceptionally special it leaves the actor high and dry."

There Cornelia gives you the plain unvarnished truth, and nothing but the truth. You behave so oddly in the presence of artists that they have come to dread meeting you and are thus often tempted to give

*(Continued overleaf)*



## Conversation Piece

(Continued from previous page)

you the slip. You rush up to an actress and with all the best intentions in the world simply exclaim, "I saw you as Juliet!" Lost in admiration, you say so much and no more; but how can the poor woman reply to such a statement? You give her nothing to grasp at. She cannot attempt to reply, since she has no idea of your reaction to her Juliet. Much as she may appreciate your interest in her work, she would be much happier if you had said, "I thought you were lousy as Juliet." Then she would know how you felt about it, and no doubt she could frame some appropriate reply!

### Complete Strangers

On speaking to an actress you should remember that you are a complete stranger to her. When you merely announce that you saw her as Juliet she is in no position to enlarge upon the statement or put any construction upon it from any previous knowledge she may have of you or your tastes, for she possesses none whatsoever. If someone suddenly came up to you in the street and said, "I saw you cleaning the windows last week," you would probably reply, "So what?" and it is more than certain that you would endeavour to cross the road to avoid contact with the same person when you saw him approaching a second time.

Why are you so unhelpful in the presence of an artist? After all, you seek his company, and not he yours, so it is up to you to make conversation as easy and as free from embarrassment as possible.

### Breaking the Ice

When you meet your business colleague's wife at a dance you are all honey and make tender enquiries about her welfare, her home, the baby, and a host of other topics which enables the woman to reply with ease and to exchange quite an intelligent and pleasant conversation with you. In a few moments you have broken the ice and she feels absolutely at home in your company—so much so, that she asks you to forget about the next dance in order to go to the buffet for a heart-to-heart chat about the rose trees or the potatoes she planted last week.

Even in the railway carriage in the presence of people you have never seen before, and probably have no particular desire to see again, you exude your charm and relieve the tedium of the journey for both them and yourself. Maybe you open negotiations with remarks on the weather, or on the crowded condition of the corridor, or on the headlines in the morning radio bulletin—but in any case you choose a subject upon which you can both exchange a few ideas, and in this manner you gain mutual confidence, until with the deft posing of a few "feelers" you come to know these strangers

fairly well, and probably rattle away on a pleasant conversation for the rest of the journey.

The star, on the other hand, means much more to you than the casual acquaintance in the railway carriage. You must be interested in her work or you would have no desire to contact her in the first instance. You have probably seen her in a number of roles, and by gleanings quite a bit about her private life from the newspapers you have a much better start than you had in the railway carriage. She is not a complete stranger to you, even though you are one to her. You have the advantage, and it is surely your place to put her at her ease, by broaching a subject you have in common and broaching it in such a manner that it is possible for her to furnish some sort of a reply to your remarks.

### Easy to Talk To

Actors are really pretty easy people to talk to. They play any part from a Queen to a Charwoman and in consequence they have a superficial knowledge of a fairly wide range. They know a bit about most things, for in order to gain local colour for their characterisations they read interesting books; they visit interesting places; and they are invariably mixing with interesting people. They may live entirely within that little pasteboard world of the theatre, but if you are a true theatregoer you will find that world the most fascinating environment you know, and that fact alone should make conversation with an actress the easiest thing in the world. Quite apart from being flattered by hero-worship, the artist never fails to appreciate an encounter with anyone who genuinely finds the theatre the most satisfying and interesting of all pastimes.

If you are clever enough to convey this impression to the star of your choice and if you limit your remarks to those of a helpful calibre you will find the artist all the more human on account of being treated as a normal human being. After all, beneath the painted mask one finds ordinary men and women speaking the same language as yours and expecting you to speak to them as you would address any other mortal happening to cross your path in the daily round. Because one man earns his living by selling bread and another by selling personality there is no earthly reason why they should not be addressed in the same manner and in the same language.

If you continue to embarrass stars with conversation that inevitably leads to deadlock and causes them to feel each meeting with you only shows them at a distinct disadvantage, you can hardly blame them for avoiding an encounter which only turns out to be an ordeal for them and a disappointment to you. You alone are to blame, and the solution lies in your own hands—or on your own tongue!

# English National Ballet

AN INTERESTING REVIEW  
OF THE POSITION OF BALLET  
IN THIS COUNTRY TO-DAY

by

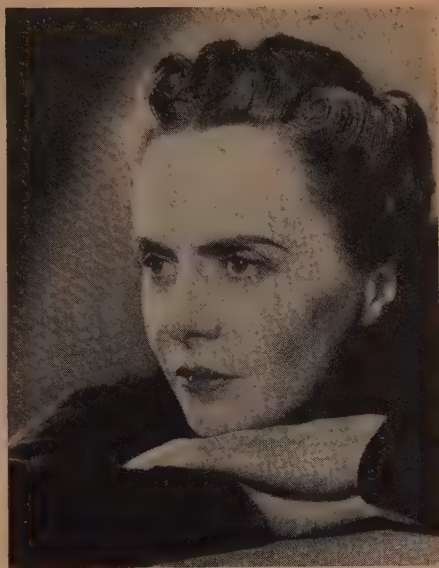
**Audrey Williamson**

**I**N a month free from ballet in London it is possible for critics and balletgoers to pause and consider the present position of ballet in England. This occasional stocktaking is the more necessary since the startling rise in popularity of ballet since the war has caused the overnight growth of numerous companies ostensibly presenting "ballet" but losing title to any serious consideration because of their choreographic or dancing poverty and lack of traditional background.

These companies serve their turn in war-time as providers of entertainment and a pretty spectacle for theatregoers with no real love for or knowledge of ballet, but lacking artistic roots and background they will inevitably disappear when the present "boom" ends. Ballet then will survive through those companies who have over a period of years built on a sound basis of knowledge and integrity and have shown consistent development. This means, in England, and omitting such brilliant alien growths as the Ballets Jooss and whatever foreign companies may visit us after the war, the Sadler's Wells Company and the Ballet Rambert.

## "National Ballet" Defined

The question as to which of these two companies, after a decade or more of existence, can be more truly termed the English National Ballet could hardly have arisen in an art less permeated by confused theorising and "behind scenes" politics than that of ballet. No music lover or musician would seriously apply the title of "National Orchestra" to a chamber music quintet, however high its standards of playing and repertoire; in every country in which the fine arts—music, ballet, or the drama—are subsidised by the State the term "National" automatically implies an organised body capable of performing major full-scale works both modern and classical. The Ballet Rambert has never been qualified, by reason of its small scale, to maintain classical works in its repertoire, and its best choreographers have created their most important ballets only after leaving the company to work within larger organisations such as Sadler's Wells and the Ballet Theatre of America.



*Anthony*

**NINETTE DE VALOIS**

The term "national" has also other and more material implications. It implies permanency, freedom from the profit-making motive, if possible an attached school, directorship elastically controlled by an impartial governing body. How fatal dependency on one individual and private enterprise can be to the survival of a ballet company has been shown by the complete disintegration of the Diaghileff Ballet after his death and, more recently, by the enforced break of two years in the existence of the Ballet Rambert. The Sadler's Wells Company, attached to the Old Vic organisation which in England most nearly approximates in conditions to a National Theatre, is free from this precariousness of existence; it has (or will have again after the war) its own theatre, ballet school and permanent company, it is independent of ordinary commercial "backing," and because of its sound planning and background it would survive, even though it would temporarily suffer by, a change of directorship.

## Sadler's Wells Pre-eminent

The Sadler's Wells Ballet holds its pre-eminent position in England not only because it has kept the major classical ballets in its repertoire (it is, in fact, the only ballet company outside Russia to have



## English National Ballet

(Continued from previous page)

performed *Le Lac des Cygnes* and *The Sleeping Princess* in their entirety), but because the best native choreographers and dancers work for it. There are no English choreographers seriously to compare in stature and achievement with Frederick Ashton and Ninette de Valois, and their greatest ballets—*Apparitions*, *Horoscope*, *Dante Sonata*, *The Wanderer*, *Job*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Checkmate*—have all been created for the Wells or (in the case of *Job*) absorbed into its repertoire. Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann are equally indisputably the leading dancers in England and artistically they rank with those of any foreign company seen here. The fact that some of the best Wells ballets can no longer be maintained in the repertoire does not affect the position; the achievement stands, and they will be revived after the war. No company, in the words of the Sadler's Wells director, Ninette de Valois, can do more than "mark time" in present circumstances.

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Apart from Marie Rambert (a fine inspirer but not herself a creator), the main influence on English Ballet has been exercised by Ninette de Valois, Frederick Ashton and Robert Helpmann. Ninette de Valois takes first place not only because the Sadler's Wells Ballet is in every important sense her own creation, but because more than any English choreographer she has given to native ballet a national style and character. Ashton has added the brilliance of dance invention which was necessary if English ballet was to preserve its link with classical tradition. Helpmann's influence is not as choreographer (his one major work, *Hamlet*, is too recent for this, and though he has original gifts he may prove to lack the incentive for further development in this field); but as a dancer-mime of outstanding genius he has had an obvious and valuable influence in shaping the dramatic trend of English choreography and in inspiring other dancers by his artistry and sincerity. Constant Lambert's work as musical director of the Wells has also been of unique value to English ballet, and I place his influence below that of the other three only because ballet is, finally, more dependent on standards of choreography and dancing than standards of music. No ballet which is choreographically bad will survive, however fine its music, whereas a good ballet with superb dancing opportunities and undistinguished music may outlast a century, like *Giselle*. As regards décor the Wells has employed many fine artists and Leslie Hurry, a Helpmann discovery, is the major figure in ballet design of recent years.

### Audience and Critic

There are two other factors in the creation of National Ballet: the audience and the critic. In England the ballet audience tends to be more a hindrance than a help to ballet creation, its attitude ranging from destructive and consciously "superior" criticism and laudation of the second-rate to the type of "fan" persecution that has made the life of one leading dancer a misery and poisoned in anticipation his return to ballet after work in another medium. In neither case is the mentality adult. An intelligent, responsive and broadminded audience, free from both hysteria and intellectual snobbery, needs to be created after the war if ballet is to be taken as seriously as its sister arts by educated people.

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## DOROTHY] DICKSON

A charming new portrait of Dorothy Dickson, who plays a leading role in John Gielgud's production of *Crisis in Heaven*, Eric Linklater's new comedy which will be coming to London shortly, following a provincial tour. Miss Dickson, star of so many musicals, recently proved her versatility in West End revue.



Portraits by 20th Century Studios



## BEATRICE LILLIE

A characteristic study of the one and only Beatrice Lillie, who is playing her first straight role in this country in the H. M. Tennent production of *Staff Dance*, a new comedy by Robert Morley. Mr. Morley himself is playing the lead, and the play will reach the West End after a prior-to-London tour.

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**H**ERE is an example of amateur work as it was practised in London in April. At six p.m. by a platform barrier at Waterloo a company of some nine individuals meet with a margin of seconds to catch the train. They arrive, two from the B.B.C., one from the Foreign Office, one from the Ministry of Food, and others from various business occupations. They form a company of players of varied experience, ranging from the maturity of fifteen years playing to a second or third appearance. Their destination is a military establishment just outside London, where in the depot's theatre they are to perform *Fanny's First Play*.

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This is the amateur's spirit in the fifth year of war, and their reward is the joy of the work and the memory of hearty applause from an audience really discovering that the play is the thing. The company in this instance is The Taverners; no doubt there are similar spirits up and down the country.

**D**ONCASTER Technical College has produced an interesting, illustrated brochure describing the Dramatic Art Department. There is a running commentary on the department's foundation and progress, with illustrations of settings and players. No less than twenty-one plays have been staged during the war, and the work includes lectures, conferences and discussions on the theatre.

A historical pageant, *This Warrior Race*, by Joan Brampton, written for the Salute the Soldier Savings Campaign, is being performed in towns in West Sussex, at opening ceremonies to launch the savings weeks. Most of the players are drawn from that vigorous organisation, Brighton Little Theatre, whose industry and zeal must be responsible for many adherents to the spoken

(Continued overleaf)

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## Amateur Stage (Cont. from previous page)

drama. First performance of *This Warrior Race* was at Petworth on April 15th, and bookings continue to the end of July. Miss Brampton is also author of a comedy thriller, *Chez Clarissa*, booked for two performances at Horsham at the end of April, and previously given for a week at Amersham Playhouse and a week at Colwyn Bay Repertory Theatre.

Included in Toynbee Hall fixtures is a production of *The Light of Heart* by the Query Players on April 29th at 6.30 p.m. On June 3rd and 10th, at 3 p.m., Theatre Workshop will be given by pupils of Toynbee School of Drama.

## AS WE GO TO PRESS

**A**NNA NEAGLE is playing the principal part in *Emma*, the dramatisation of the Jane Austen novel, which Robert Donat is presenting in the West End after a tour of nine weeks following the opening at the Opera House, Manchester, on May 1st. George Thirwell, Ambrosine Phillpotts, Margaret Vines, H. R. Hignett, Cecil Ramage, Frank Allenby and Gillian Lind are also in the cast.

**F**RENCH for *Love* in which Alice Delysia made a big hit at the Criterion a few years ago is being revived and will open in Southsea. Alice Delysia and Hugh Wakefield are the stars with Sheila Douglas-Pennant in the original Rosalyn Boulter part.

**T**HE dramatisation of Kate O'Brien's novel *The Last of Summer*, by the authoress and John Perry, was presented at Liverpool on April 24th. John Gielgud produces and the cast includes Fay Compton, Geoffrey Toone, Hugh Burden and Ada Reeve.

**C**EDRIC HARDWICKE on his return from America will be appearing in *The House on the Bridge*, a costume play by Edward Percy set in the plague year, 1665. The play will be presented by Alec L. Rea and E. P. Clift.

**A**LBERT DE COURVILLE has taken over the American rights of *Ten Little Niggers*, the successful thriller at the Cambridge.

**T**HE Chanticleer, the little theatre in Clareville Street, S.W., has reopened with a new political comedy, *The Orator*, by Major Lionel Birch.

**T**HE current Unity Theatre production *Green and Pleasant Land* ends on May 14th. The next production *All Change Here* by Ted Willis will be produced by Herbert Marshall towards the end of May.

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